

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W
----- 126860

O P 231633Z JAN 76
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5901
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01239

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, US, GW
SUBJECT: MEETING OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS IN DENMARK -
JANUARY 18-19, 1976

REF: A. STATE 008875; B. BONN 678

1. I SAW BRANDT AGAIN TODAY AT HIS HIDE-OUT IN MUENSTER/EIFEL. AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR CONVERSATION, HE HANDED ME HIS REPLY TO THE SECRETARY'S LETTER WHICH I HAD GIVEN HIM ON JANUARY 14. OUR TRANSLATION IS BEING SENT BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM WITH THE ORIGINAL GERMAN TEXT FOLLOWING BY POUCH.

2. TURNING TO THE HELSINGOR CONFERENCE, BRANDT SAID HE HAD BEEN SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTED WITH THE FORMAT. JORGENSEN HAD INVITED SO MANY PARTICIPANTS (MORE THAN A HUNDRED) THAT THE INFORMAL AND PRIVATE NATURE OF THE SESSIONS WAS LOST, AND HE (BRANDT) SOMETIMES HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT HE WAS PARTICIPATING IN A UN MEETING. THE CONTRAST WITH THE MUCH SMALLER CONFERENCE ARRANGED BY PALME IN STOCKHOLM WAS OBVIOUS, BUT AFTER ALL THE DANES HAD TO BE PERMITTED THEIR MOMENT OF GLORY. THE TROUBLE WAS THAT ALL OF THE SPEAKERS AT THE FORMAL SESSIONS KNEW THAT THEY WERE, IN EFFECT, TALKING FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION, SINCE LEAKS OR DETAILED BRIEFINGS

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WERE INEVITABLE, AND THEREFORE TAILORED THEIR REMARKS

ACCORDINGLY.

3. NEVERTHELESS, BRANDT CONTINUED, HE THOUGHT THE MEETING HAD SERVED A GENERALLY USEFUL PURPOSE. MOREOVER, IT HAD PROVIDED AN OCCASION FOR VERY USEFUL PRIVATE TALKS ON THE MARGIN.

4. BRANDT HAD HAD SUCH A PRIVATE TALK WITH DE MARTINO DURING WHICH HE HAD CAUTIONED THE ITALIAN SOCIALIST AGAINST FOLLOWING A COURSE OF ACTION WHICH WOULD ENHANCE COMMUNIST PARTY INFLUENCE IN ITALY, AND HAD URGED THAT AN EFFORT BE MADE TO GET TOGETHER AGAIN WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. DE MARTINO HAD TAKEN THE LINE THAT THE SOCIALISTS HAD HAD TO ACT DRAMATICALLY IN ORDER TO AVOID BEING LEFT OUT OF THE PICTURE AS THE PCI AND THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS INFORMALLY WORKED OUT DEALS. THE COMMUNIST TACTIC OF SUPPORTING THE GOVERNMENT BUT THEN DISCLAIMING ALL RESPONSIBILITY FOR WHAT THE GOVERNMENT HAD DONE DURING ELECTORAL CAMPAIGNS HAD TO BE FRUSTRATED. THE RESULT OF ALL THE MANEUVERING WHICH WAS NOW GOING ON BETWEEN THE PARTIES IN ITALY, ACCORDING TO DE MARTINO, WOULD PROBABLY LEAD TO EARLY GENERAL ELECTIONS. AS FAR AS THE SOCIALISTS WERE CONCERNED, THEY WOULD PREFER POSTPONEMENT OF SUCH ELECTIONS SINCE THEY CONSIDERED THAT OVER A LONGER PERIOD OF TIME THE GOOD SENSE OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE WOULD ASSERT ITSELF AND AVERT ANY FURTHER PCI GAINS. IN THE SHORT RUN, HOWEVER, THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE CASE.

5. BRANDT ADDED THAT HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM AUSTRIA WHERE HE HAD MET WITH KREISKY. THE LATEST INFORMATION THERE WAS THAT A SOCIALIST-CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE, BUT HE WONDERED WHETHER THIS WAS ACTUALLY THE CASE. DE MARTINO HAD ALSO SAID IN HELSINGOR THAT A FURTHER CONDITION OF PSI SUPPORT FOR THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS WAS ACCEPTANCE OF AT LEAST A PART OF THE SOCIALIST ECONOMIC PROGRAM.

6. BRANDT WENT ON TO SAY THAT HE HAD ALSO HAD A FRANK CONVERSATION WITH MITTERAND. AFTER LISTENING TO
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HIS (BRANDT'S) WORDS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNISTS, THE FRENCH LEADER EXCLAIMED "WHAT DO YOU WANT OF ME?" WITH SOME HEAT, MITTERAND ARGUED THAT, WHEN HE CAME ALONG, THE SOCIALIST PARTY WAS IN A STATE OF DISINTEGRATION. HE COULD NOW PREDICT WITH CONFIDENCE THAT, IN THE NEXT ELECTIONS, THE SOCIALISTS WOULD WIN MORE THAN 30 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IF THEY CONTINUED WITH THEIR PRESENT TACTICS. THIS WOULD MAKE

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THEM STRONGER THAN THE COMMUNIST PARTY. TO ACCOMPLISH SUCH A RESULT, IT WOULD BE NECESSARY TO DRAW AWAY FURTHER SUPPORT FROM THE COMMUNISTS, AND THE ONLY WAY THE FRENCH WORKERS COULD BE ATTRACTED WAS TO MAKE THEM THINK THAT THERE IS A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE COMMUNIST PARTY. ANY SOCIALIST APPEAL FOR THE WORKERS WOULD BE LOST IF THE PARTY WENT INTO ALL OUT OPPOSITION TO THE COMMUNISTS, ACCORDING TO MITTERAND.

7. BRANDT COMMENTED THAT, ACCORDING TO THE LATEST INFORMATION REACHING HIM, THERE WAS A REAL POSSIBILITY OF A SOCIALIST SPLIT WITH THE COMMUNISTS ON THE ISSUE OF DIRECT ELECTIONS TO THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT. WHAT SEEMED TO BE SHAPING UP IN FRANCE WAS AN UNHOLY ALLIANCE ON THIS ISSUE OF THE RIGHT-WING GAULLISTS AND THE COMMUNISTS. BRANDT ADDED THAT, WHILE HE COULD NOT ACCEPT THE ARGUMENTS OF EITHER DE MARTINO OR MITTERAND, BOTH OF THEM SEEMED SINCERE ENOUGH IN MAKING THEM, AND WERE CERTAIN THE COURSE THEY WERE FOLLOWING WAS THE ONLY ONE OPEN TO THEIR RESPECTIVE PARTIES.

8. FINALLY, BRANDT NOTED, THE SPANISH SOCIALIST GONZALES HAD MADE HIS POSITION QUITE CLEAR IN HELSINGOR. HE WAS NOT FOR COOPERATION WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY IN SPAIN, OR ANYWHERE ELSE. WHAT HE DID NOT WANT IN

SPAIN WAS THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY BE ALLOWED TO MONOPOLIZE THE MARTYR ROLE BY THEIR CONTINUING TO BE

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BANNED, WHILE THE SOCIALISTS WERE ALLOWED TO CARRY ON
POLITICAL ACTIVITIES.

9. DEPARTMENT REPEAT TO OTHER POSTS AS DESIRED.

HILLENBRAND

SECRET

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